

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 00488 091453Z

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3318

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IN, US

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER JUSTIFIES EMERGENCY; STILL SEES  
EXTERNAL THREAT

SUMMARY: THE PRIME MINISTER CONCENTRATED ON HER DOMESTIC  
OPPOSITION IN SPEECHES JANUARY 8 AND 9. SHE DEFENDED THE EMERGENCY,  
AND ATTACKED THE NON-CONGRESS DMK STATE GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL  
NADU AND THE JANATA FRONT STATE GOVERNMENT OF GUJARAT. SHE  
PROMISED FULL DISCUSSION BEFORE ANY CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES.  
IN BRIEF REFERENCES TO INTERNAL AFFAIRS SHE WARNED OF THE  
BALEFUL INFLUENCE OF THE WESTERN PRESS, "AGENCIES" WHICH USED  
INTELLECTUALS, AND OF EXTERNAL FORCES INIMICAL TO THE NA;TION.

SHE SPECIFICALLY PRAISED AMERICA, AND CONGRATULATED THE UNITED  
STATES ON ITS BICENTENNIAL. END SUMMARY.

1. SPEAKING TO THE RAJYA SABHA (UPPER HOUSE) ON JANUARY 8,  
PRIME MINISTER GANDHI SAID THAT IF THERE WERE ANY CHANGES  
TO BE MADE IN THE CONSTITUTION, THEY WOULD BE MADE ONLY AFTER  
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 00488 091453Z

DUE DELIBERATION AND THE WIDEST POSSIBLE CONSULTATION.

SHE SAID, "OUR CONCERN WAS MORE FOR PEOPLE'S RIGHTS. PERSONAL RIGHTS ARE IMPORTANT. BUT THEY CANNOT BE HIGHER THAN THE NATION'S UNITY AND INTEGRITY. WE MUST MAKE DEMOCRACY MORE PURPOSEFUL AND MEANINGFUL FOR THE PEOPLE." THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT CONGRESS COULD WIN AN ELECTION NOW, BUT THE POINT WAS WHETHER BY DISTURBING THE EMERGENCY NOW THE COUNTRY WOULD HAVE GREATER UNITY AND STRENGTH, OR WOULD DISRUPTIVE FORCES BE RELEASED WHICH WOULD CREATE THE OLD ATMOSPHERE. THE EMERGENCY, SHE CONTINUED, HAD BEEN DECLARED BECAUSE OF ACTS OF SABOTAGE AND BECAUSE OF A CONSCIOUS EFFORT TO PARALYZE THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

2. MRS. GANDHI ROUNDLY CRITICIZED THE OPPOSITION FOR IRRESPONSIBLE ACTIVITIES. SHE ASSERTED THE WORLD UNDERSTOOD THE EMERGENCY, CITING THE SUPPORT INDIA ENJOYED FROM THE SOCIALIST AND NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES. SHE REGRETTED THE RESTRICTIONS THE EMERGENCY ENTAILED, BUT EXPLAINED SHE COULD NOT PERMIT A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE TO DESTROY DEMOCRACY: "WE ARE STRIVING TO TAKE THIS COUNTRY OF 600 MILLIONS OF PEOPLE FROM ONE AGE TO ANOTHER--NOT ONLY TO PROVIDE BETTER PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL LIFE TO THEM... THIS CANNOT HAPPEN WITHOUT SOME CURBS..." SHE WARNED INTELLECTUALS NOT TO BE SO ENAMORED OF FOREIGN WRITINGS THAT THEY BE REMOVED FROM THE REALITIES OF INDIA. THE PRIME MINISTER CAUTIONED PARLIAMENTARIANS TO BE WARY OF WESTERN PRESS CRITICISMS, AND REMINDED THEM OF NEWSPAPER REPORTS THAT CORRESPONDENTS HAD BEEN USED FOR INTELLIGENCE WORK. SHE ALSO TOOK THE WESTERN PRESS TO TASK FOR FAILING TO CONDEMN THE MURDER OF LEADERS IN BANGLADESH.

3. ON JANUARY 9 THE PRIME MINISTER MADE A SIMILAR SPEECH TO THE LOK SABHA IN WINDING UP THE DEBATE ON THE PRESIDENT'S OPENING ADDRESS. MRS. GANDHI OPENED HER REMARKS WITH A SPIRITED DEFENSE OF THE EMERGENCY AND THE TWENTY POINT ECONOMIC PROGRAM. SHE ASSERTED THE POINTS DO NOT CONFLICT WITH THE FIFTH FIVE YEAR PLAN. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT INDIA HAD TAMED INFLATION AND REDUCED PRICES BY SEVEN PERCENT IN SPITE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC INSTABILITY. SHE CRITICIZED THE TAMIL NADU STATE GOVERNMENT FOR ITS FAILURE ON ITS CAPITAL PLAN OUTLAYS. MRS. GANDHI SAID SHE WOULD HAVE IGNORED THAT POOR RECORD WERE IT NOT FOR THE ATTEMPTS OF THE DMK TO MISLEAD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 00488 091453Z

THE PUBLIC BY SAYING IT WAS THE CENTER THAT STOOD IN THE WAY OF ECONOMIC PROGRESS.

4. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID SHE FAVORED A DIALOGUE WITH THE OPPOSITION IF THEY WERE WILLING TO GIVE UP OBSTRUCTION AND VIOLENCE. SHE CRITICIZED THE NON CPI-OPPOSITION PARTIES, HOWEVER, FOR WHAT SHE TERMED AN UNHOLY COMBINATION TO SPREAD DESPAIR AMONG THE PEOPLE. EXPLAINING WHY OPPOSITION LEADERS

HAD BEEN DETAINED, MRS. GANDHI SAID SHE HAD NEVER ACCUSED THEM OF TREASON OR DOUBTED THEIR PATRIOTISM, BUT THE DANGER WAS NOT OF AN INDIVIDUAL ACT, BUT OF THE COLLECTIVE CHALLENGE BEING EXPLOITED BY INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FORCES INIMICAL TO THE NATION. SHE WARNED HER OPPONENTS THAT POWERFUL FORCES OPPOSED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM, AND ADDED, "THESE FORCES WILL HAVE TO BE COMBATED WITH ALL THE POWER AT OUR COMMAND." THE PRIME MINISTER CATALOGUED A NUMBER OF ELECTION ABUSES IN GUJARAT, BOTH DURING THE RECENT MUNICIPAL, AND PANCHYAT CAMPAIGNS AS WELL AS THE STATE ELECTION LAST SPRING. WITH SOME BITTERNESS SHE SAID THAT SHE NEVER SPOKE AT A RALLY WHERE LAKS OF PEOPLE WERE ATTENDING BUT THAT A GROUP OF 15 TO 25 OPPOSITION WORKERS APPEARED AND THREW STONES, OR SHOES, AND SHOUTED INSULTS AND EVEN OBSCENITIES. THOUSANDS OF HARIJANS HAD BEEN UNABLE TO VOTE, SHE ASSERTED, AND OTHERS WHO DID HAD HOUSES RAZED AFTER SUPPORTING CONGRESS CANDIDATES. THE DECISION TO HOLD A STATE ELECTION IN GUJARAT WAS WRONG, SHE ADDED, EVEN IF IT WAS DONE IN ORDER TO SAVE MORARJI (DESAI'S) LIFE.

5. THE PRIME MINISTER MADE ONLY A FEW BRIEF REFERENCES TO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. SHE SAID THERE WERE "AGENCIES" WHICH HAVE LONG EXPERIENCE IN MANY COUNTRIES..USING JOURNALISTS, STUDENTS, AND INTELLECTUALS, BUT SHE PERMITTED THIS SENTENCE TO TRAIL OFF. IT WAS LINKED TO HER EARLY REFERENCE TO EXTERNAL FORCES COOPERATING WITH THE OPPOSITION. TOWARD THE END OF HER REMARKS SHE RECOUNTED INDIA'S DESIRE TO HAVE FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES, EVEN THOSE WITH WHICH THERE IS DISAGREEMENT. SHE SAID THAT INDIA SEEKS FRIENDSHIP WITH

AMERICA, IN SPITE OF DIFFERENCES, AND EXPRESSED ADMIRATION FOR AMERICA AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FOR THEIR DYNAMISM IN SCIENCE, EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY. "WE CONGRATULATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 NEW DE 00488 091453Z

THEM ON THEIR BICENTENARY." (THAT WAS THE ONLY SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO A FOREIGN COUNTRY SHE MADE OTHER THAN NOTING AT AN EARLIER POINT HER CRITICS ALSO SAW CHINA AND CHILE AS DEMOCRACIES.)

7. DURING ONE BRIEF INTERRUPTION, WHEN SHE WAS INSINUATING THE DMK MEMBERS ATTACKED AN ADMK MEMBER IN THE HOUSE, A CPM MEMBER, NOT TO BE OUTDONE, SHOUTED "YOU THROW THE OPPOSITION IN JAIL'

"NEEDLESS TO SAY THIS HAS NOT BEEN REPORTED IN THE PRESS".

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## Message Attributes

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